Annex to the letter dated 1 August 2011 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement on Peace and Nuclear Disarmament issued by the Committee on International Relations of the National Assembly of the People's Power of the Republic of Cuba

The Committee on International Relations of the National Assembly of the People's Power, aware that nuclear weapons, together with climate change, constitute the most significant challenge facing humanity, expresses its deep concern about the existence of more than 22,600 nuclear warheads, half of which are ready for immediate use.

The Committee condemns the lack of political will on the part of the nuclear Powers, which have not fulfilled the commitment to conclude a treaty for the elimination of nuclear weapons and which continue to develop their existing nuclear arsenals.

It rejects the alarming increase in military expenditure, which currently amounts to $1.5 trillion, or several times the amount of resources allocated to international development assistance. With the resources now devoted to weapons, it would be possible to feed the more than 1.02 billion hungry people in the world, prevent the deaths of the 11 million children who die each year of hunger and preventable diseases, combat the extreme poverty suffered by over 1.4 billion people worldwide or provide literacy training to the 759 million adults who cannot read or write.

It reaffirms the position, which Cuba has expressed repeatedly and at the highest level, that nuclear weapons must be completely eliminated, and supports the declaration on that issue adopted at the sixteenth Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Bali, Indonesia, in May 2011, which calls for the convening of a high-level international conference for the purpose of reaching agreement on an agenda for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

As the Cuban Commander-in-Chief, Fidel Castro Ruz, has warned on various occasions, humanity is now at a pivotal moment in history; threats to the survival of our species have grown increasingly serious and alarming, and the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons cannot be used by States or other actors is to eliminate and strictly prohibit them.

The Committee on International Relations calls upon all of the world's legislative bodies to promote practical steps towards the total elimination of nuclear arsenals, so as to ensure that future generations can live in a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons.